

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15

NEA-10 TRSE-00 SAI-01 IO-14 OIC-04 AEC-11 OMB-01

ACDA-19 DRC-01 MC-02 /166 W
----- 048747

R 191837Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9379

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USNMR SHAPE

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CITE: SHAPE FOR INTAF; VIENNA FOR MBFR DEL

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: NATO, MCAP, GW

SUBJECT: BUNDESWEHR REORGANIZATION

REF: VIENNA 10116

1. A DEFENSE MINISTRY SOURCE TOLD US RECENTLY THAT THE
MINISTRY IS STUDYING THE QUESTION OF HOW THE READY
RESERVES WILL BE TREATED IN AN MBFR FRAMEWORK. WE GATHER
THAT BECAUSE OF DIFFERING IN-HOUSE VIEWS, IT MAY TAKE
SOME PERIOD FOR THE MINISTRY TO COME UP WITH A POSITION.

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2. REFTEL CORRECTLY POINTED OUT THAT MANY DETAILS OF THE REORGANIZATION HAVE NOT YET BEEN ANNOUNCED, BUT WE BELIEVE THE READY RESERVE CONCEPT, AS A CRUCIAL PART OF THE PLAN, IS NOT LIKELY TO BE CHANGED IN AN IMPORTANT WAY. THE MOD INFORMED US THE PROPOSAL CALLS FOR 415,000 MEN TO BE PHYSICALLY PRESENT AND ON ACTIVE DUTY IN REGULAR UNITS. 33,000 WILL BE ASSIGNED TO SCHOOLS OR BE IN TRAINING ASSIGNMENTS; 17,000 WILL BE IN A "VARIABLE" GROUP, I.E. IN TRANSFER, OR PROCESSING IN OR OUT OF THE SERVICE. THE TOTAL, 465,000, WILL BE THE BUNDESWEHR'S PRESENT FOR DUTY STRENGTH. HOWEVER, ON TOP OF THIS NUMBER WILL BE THE 30,000 MEN ASSIGNED TO THE READY RESERVE GROUP, MAKING A TOTAL OF 495,000 ASSIGNED MEN. OUR CONTACTS STATE THAT UNDER THE REORGANIZATION SCHEME THE READY RESERVE FORCES ARE CONSIDERED TO BE, FOR CONCEPTUAL PURPOSES, PART OF THE TOTAL OPERATIONAL PEACETIME FORCES. THE READY RESERVES WILL CONSIST OF NEWLY DISCHARGED SOLDIERS FROM ACTIVE DUTY, HELD IN READY RESERVE STATUS FOR ONE YEAR, LIABLE FOR IMMEDIATE CALL-UP UPON THE DECISION OF THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE WITHOUT NEED FOR BUNDESTAG CONSULTATION OR DECISION. THEY WILL BE ASSIGNED TO REGULAR BUNDESWEHR UNITS LOCATED WITHIN A 50 KM RADIUS OF THEIR PLACE OF RESIDENCE.

3. DEFENSE MINISTRY SOURCES BELIEVE THAT SOME OF THE CRITICISM WHICH GREETED THE READY RESERVE PROPOSAL COULD HAVE BEEN HEADED OFF IF THE BUNDESWEHR'S CURRENT DUTY STRENGTH FIGURE HAD BEEN USED AS A BASE LINE RATHER THAN THE NATO FORCE GOAL OF 495,000 MEN. USE OF THE 495,000 NUMBER GIVES THE IMPRESSION THAT THE BUNDESWEHR WILL UNDERGO AN ACTUAL PHYSICAL REDUCTION OF 30,000 MEN TO THE NEW STRENGTH OF 465,000. OUR CONTACTS POINT OUT THAT IN OCTOBER 1973, THE BUNDESWEHR'S ACTIVE DUTY STRENGTH WAS ABOUT 481,000 MEN; THEREFORE THE RE-ORGANIZATION PROPOSAL CALLING FOR 465,000 ACTIVES ENTAILS A REDUCTION OF ONLY 16,000 ACTIVE DUTY SOLDIERS. THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO INTRODUCE ENABLING LEGISLATION IN TO THE BUNDESTAG IN 1974, CONCURRENTLY WITH NATO CONSULTATIONS. AS FAR AS WE ARE AWARE, THE GOVERNMENT HA

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HAS SET ITSELF ONLY TWO DEADLINES FOR ITS PLANS: FIRST,
ALL IMPLEMENTING LAWS SHOULD BE PASSED BEFORE NEW FEDERAL
ELECTIONS IN 1976; SECOND, THE REORGANIZATION SHOULD BE
COMPLETED BY 1978. THIS WILL PROVIDE AMPLE TIME
FOR THOROUGH NATO CONSULTATIONS, INCLUDING ANY CHANGES
RECOMMENDED BY SACEUR OR THE MC, AS WELL AS AMPLE
OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC AND PARLIAMENTARY DISCUSSION.

4. WE UNDERSTAND THAT ADMIRAL ZIMMERMANN WILL BEGIN
FORMAL NATO CONSULTATIONS WITH A FULL SCALE REVIEW OF
THE PLAN IN NATO DEC 19. HIS PRESENTATION, PARTS OF
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WHICH WE HAVE SEEN, WILL GO INTO DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES PLANNED IN THE COMBAT UNITS. ONE POINT SEEMED TO EMERGE CLEARLY FROM THE PRESENTATION: EVERY EFFORT HAS BEEN MADE TO LEAVE UNTOUCHED THE COMBAT OR FIGHTING CAPABILITY OF THE COMBAT BRIGADES. READY RESERVES IN THE COMBAT BRIGADES WILL, FOR INSTANCE, BE ASSIGNED ONLY TO POSITIONS AT THE BATTALION LEVEL AND ABOVE; NONE WILL BE ASSIGNED TO COMBAT COMPANIES OR PLATOONS. WE CONTINUE TO FIND A HIGH DEGREE OF AGREEMENT AMONG BUNDESWEHR OFFICERS IN THE MOD THAT THE READY RESERVE CONCEPT AS APPLIED IN THE COMBAT BRIGADES IS A WORKABLE AND A REASON-
ABLE ANSWER TO THE LONGTERM PROBLEMS OF RISING OPERATIONAL AND EQUIPMENT COSTS WHICH FACE THE GERMAN ARMED FORCES. HILLENBRAND

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